

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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Coffee Shuffle



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*Safety
requires
discipline*

Kaz, senior mechanical engineer for a paper mill in British Columbia, told Session 4B of the Leadership Development Lab:

"In May of this year, Barry, a student intern, had just started his four month coop term with us. Each morning, Barry would come into his office and change out of his street shoes into his steel-toed safety boots. As soon as he had stuffed his feet into his safety boots with the laces still untied, he would shuffle down the hall to the coffee machine for his morning coffee. After he got his coffee, he would shuffle back to his office, sit down, sip his coffee, and begin to tie his shoelaces. The first time I noticed what had become Barry's routine coffee shuffle with his laces untied, I said, 'Hey, buddy, that's dangerous. You could trip on those laces', and he promptly tied them up. The next morning, I noticed him again, and he was right back to his shuffle habit.

"In early childhood you may lay the foundation of poverty or riches, industry or idleness, good or evil, by the habits to which you train your children. Teach them right habits then, and their future life is safe."

Lydia Sigourney

"This time I just pointed to his loose laces and he again promptly tied them up. The third morning when I saw him right back in his shuffle habit again, I decided something more was needed. I pulled him aside and talked to him about the hazards of leaving his laces untied. I told him the story of a pipe fitter that broke his ankle due to loose laces. I was careful to include enough detail in my short story; when it happened,

where it happened, who was involved, and some appropriate details of what had happened. When I was through with my little story, I once again asked Barry to tie his laces in his office before heading to the coffee machine. The following week, Barry tied his laces up in his office before coming down for coffee. His new improved habit carried over throughout the rest of his 4-month stint with us.

"The lesson I learned from this experience is that yes, with persistent, positive reinforcement, I can get the changes needed for improved performance. I can modify a person's behavior and help them develop a new habit. I learned that telling the story is the real key to getting a person's attention and convincing them of the importance of changing their behavior. The action I call you to take is don't give up if you don't get the change you are after on your first try on correcting a safety issue. Be persistent until your goal is achieved. Find and use stories to gain attention and convince your associate of the need for the changed behavior. The benefits you will gain are satisfaction from helping the other person be a safer individual, and satisfaction from helping the company achieve your safety targets."

"A large part of virtue consists in good habits."

William Paley

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